

Make prior work arrangements for rainstorms

The Labour Department (LD) today (June 1) reminded employers to make prior work arrangements for staff during and after rainstorms, including arrangements on reporting for duty, release from work, resumption of work and work from home. These arrangements not only can ensure the safety of employees and smooth operation of establishments, but also are conducive to maintaining good labour-management relations.

"Employers should make prior work arrangements for staff and contingency measures. In drawing up and implementing the work arrangements, employers should give prime consideration to employees' safety and the feasibility for employees to travel to and from their workplaces. Employers should also give consideration as much as possible to the situations faced by individual employees, such as their place of residence and the road and traffic conditions in the vicinity, and adopt a sympathetic and flexible approach with due regard to their actual difficulties and needs," an LD spokesman said.

"To avoid misunderstanding, disputes and confusion, employers should draw up the work arrangements in consultation with employees and make appropriate updates or amendments based on the experience of each occasion and the needs of both employers and employees as well as the actual situations."

The work arrangements should cover the following matters:

- * Arrangements in respect of reporting for duty;
- * Arrangements in respect of release from work;
- * Arrangements in respect of resumption of work (e.g. the number of hours within which employees should resume duty after the warning concerned is cancelled, when safety and traffic conditions allow);
- * Arrangements in respect of work from home (e.g. duty and work arrangements during and after typhoons and rainstorms);
- * Arrangements regarding working hours, wages and allowances (e.g. calculation of wages and allowances in respect of reporting for duty and absence); and
- * Special arrangements in respect of essential staff in times of adverse weather.

"Employers should conduct a timely and realistic assessment of whether there is any need for requiring essential staff to report for duty at workplaces when a rainstorm warning is in force. In assessing the need for essential staff, employers should take into account the safety of employees, including the feasibility for employees to travel to and from their workplaces or work from home in adverse weather. Employers should also consider the business nature, operational needs and urgency of service, with

due regard to the manpower requirements, staffing establishment and individual needs of employees. Employers should require only absolutely essential staff to report for duty at workplaces in adverse weather conditions and the number of essential staff at workplaces should be kept to a minimum as far as possible," the spokesman said.

"If a Red or Black Rainstorm Warning is issued during working hours, employees working indoors should continue to work as usual unless it is dangerous to do so. Supervisors of employees working outdoors in exposed areas should suspend outdoor duties as soon as practicable. They should arrange for their employees to take shelter temporarily and resume duty only when weather conditions permit. When the Black Rainstorm Warning is issued, those employees should not resume duty until the warning is cancelled and weather conditions permit. If the Black Rainstorm Warning is still in force by the end of working hours, employees should stay in a safe place until the heavy rain has passed. An area in the workplace should be made available by employers as temporary shelter for employees."

"Employers should provide transport services for employees who are required to travel to and from workplaces when the Black Rainstorm Warning is in force, or grant them an extra travelling allowance."

"For staff who have practical difficulties in resuming work on time upon cancellation of a rainstorm warning, employers should give due consideration to the circumstances of individual employees and handle each case flexibly. For example, employers may permit employees who have difficulties in returning to workplaces to work from home or allow more time for them to report for duty and resume work."

"As rainstorms are natural occurrences that cannot be avoided, for employees who are not able to report for duty or resume work on time due to adverse weather conditions, employers should not withhold their wages, good attendance bonus or allowances without reasons. Employers should enquire into the reasons and give due consideration to the exceptional circumstances in each case and should not penalise or dismiss the employee concerned rashly," he said.

The spokesman also reminded employers to observe the statutory liabilities and requirements under the Employment Ordinance, the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance, the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance, the Employees' Compensation Ordinance and the Minimum Wage Ordinance.

Employers should not deduct the annual leave, statutory holidays or rest days to which employees are entitled under the Employment Ordinance so as to compensate for the loss of working hours resulting from employees' failure to report for duty upon the announcement of a Black Rainstorm Warning. An employer who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with relevant provisions under the Employment Ordinance is liable to prosecution.

Employers should also note that they have an obligation to provide and

maintain a safe working environment for their employees under the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance. "If employees are required to work in times of rainstorms, employers should ensure that the risks at work are reduced as far as reasonably practicable," the spokesman said.

Under the Employees' Compensation Ordinance, employers are liable to pay compensation for deaths or injury incurred when employees are travelling by a direct route from their residence to their workplace, or from their workplace back to their residence after work, four hours before or after working hours on a day when Typhoon Signal No. 8 or above, or a Red or Black Rainstorm Warning is in force.

The LD has published the "Code of Practice in Times of Typhoons and Rainstorms", which outlines the major principles, the framework, the reference guidelines and information on relevant legislation for reference. The booklet can be obtained from branch offices of the Labour Relations Division or downloaded from the department's webpage (www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/wcp/Rainstorm.pdf).

CHP investigates seven additional confirmed cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 0.00am, June 1, the CHP was investigating seven additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 11 849 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 11 848 confirmed cases and one probable case).

Among the newly reported cases announced, six are imported cases and one is a local case with unknown sources.

A total of 16 cases have been reported in the past 14 days (May 18 to 31) and all of them are imported cases.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex or the list of buildings with confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the past 14 days and the latest local situation of COVID-19 available on the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk).

As a passenger flight (GA876), operated by Garuda Indonesia arriving from Jakarta of Indonesia to Hong Kong on May 30, had three passengers confirmed to have COVID-19 by arrival tests, the DH thus invoked the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances

and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H) to prohibit landing of passenger flights from Jakarta operated by Garuda Indonesia in Hong Kong from June 2 to 15.

Meanwhile, the CHP reminded those who had visited specified venues under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to receive COVID-19 nucleic acid testing according to compulsory testing notices (CTNs). The Regulation also requires all household members of close contacts of confirmed cases to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test within a specified period according to CTNs published in the Gazette. The public are also urged to seek medical attention early if symptoms develop and undergo testing as soon as possible.

The Government has launched the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. Members of the public are encouraged to get vaccinated. Details of the programme can be found at the designated website (www.covidvaccine.gov.hk).

The CHP called on members of the public to avoid going out, having social contact and dining out. They should put on a surgical mask and maintain stringent hand hygiene when they need to go out. The CHP strongly urged the elderly to stay home as far as possible and avoid going out. They should consider asking their family and friends to help with everyday tasks such as shopping for basic necessities.

The spokesman said, "Given that the situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and that there is a continuous increase in the number of cases including mutant strains reported around the world, members of the public are strongly urged to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.

"The CHP also strongly urges the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene, which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community. On a personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes. Moreover, vaccination may help keep people from getting seriously ill even if they do get COVID-19, and, generally speaking, vaccines can also reduce the chance of transmission by those who have been vaccinated. People vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine can also generate herd immunity. Members of the public are urged to get vaccinated as soon as possible and book their vaccination appointments at the website (booking.covidvaccine.gov.hk/forms/index.jsp).

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps). After using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public

understand the latest updates. Members of the public may also gain access to information via the COVID-19 WhatsApp Helpline launched by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Simply by saving 9617 1823 in their phone contacts or clicking the link wa.me/85296171823?text=hi, they will be able to obtain information on COVID-19 as well as the "StayHomeSafe" mobile app and wristband via WhatsApp.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infections, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, after touching public installations such as handrails or doorknobs, or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.

Import of poultry meat and products from areas in Lithuania and Vietnam suspended

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (June 1) that in view of notifications from the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) about an outbreak of highly pathogenic H5N8 avian influenza in Jurbarkas District Municipality of Tauragė County in Lithuania, and an outbreak of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian

influenza in Ninh Thuan Province in Vietnam, the CFS has instructed the trade to suspend the import of poultry meat and products (including poultry eggs) from the above-mentioned areas with immediate effect to protect public health in Hong Kong.

A CFS spokesman said that Hong Kong has currently established a protocol with Lithuania for the import of poultry meat but not for poultry eggs, and has currently established a protocol with Vietnam for the import of poultry eggs but not for poultry meat. According to the Census and Statistics Department, in the first three months of this year, Hong Kong imported about 7.15 million poultry eggs from Vietnam, while no poultry meat was imported from Lithuania.

"The CFS has contacted the Lithuanian and Vietnamese authorities over the issues and will closely monitor information issued by the OIE and the relevant authorities on the avian influenza outbreaks. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the development of the situation," the spokesman said.

[Appeal for information on missing man in North Point \(with photo\)](#)

Police today (June 1) appealed to the public for information on a man who went missing in North Point.

Lee Chun-ming, Johnny, aged 66, went missing after he left his residence on King's Road yesterday afternoon (May 31). His family made a report to Police on the same day.

He is about 1.7 metres tall, 77 kilograms in weight and of medium build. He has a square face with yellow complexion and short black and white hair. He was last seen wearing a deep blue shorts.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing man or may have seen him is urged to contact the Regional Missing Person Unit of Hong Kong Island on 2860 1040 or 9886 0034 or email to rmpu-hki@police.gov.hk, or contact any police station.



HAD's Emergency Co-ordination Centre in operation

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

As the Red Rainstorm Warning Signal has been issued, the Home Affairs Department's Emergency Co-ordination Centre is now in operation.

The Home Affairs Department will open temporary shelters for people in need of temporary accommodation.

For details, please contact the centre on 2572 8427.